

# NAVY DAYS

NO. 3

WINTER 2000

## TOMMY REILLY

1919 - 2000

It is with great sadness that we learned of Tommy Reilly's passing in September. Without doubt his musical contribution to the show "Trade Wind Horn-pipe" added a dimension of such magnitude that it is impossible to imagine the Navy Lark without his melodic harmonica punctuating the action. At the time of writing, the editor had not been successful in locating an album which contained music similar to the Navy Lark. But we have just put into our library a R2 re-broadcast of the Navy Lark which has a track by Tommy Reilly after the show. Check our listing to find the addition and see what else is new!



## NEW TAPE RELEASE

Lynne Porter

Leslie Phillips has recently released an audio cassette of his performance of Peter Tinniswood's play "On the Whole It's Been Jolly Good". The recording was made at one of the Hampstead performances which enjoyed 'sell out' status. (Details inside)

It is not the NLAS policy to put commercial recordings in to the Navy Lark library, unless they are 'out-of-print' and enthusiasts would have little chance of finding the material in the shops. If you would like to hear this recording, copies can be obtained via mail order or from your preferred bookshop or music store.

The tape is released by Hodder Headline audiobooks

## Navy Lark 13 April 2001

01/09 24.5.1959 The Multiple Mines  
01/10 31.5.1959 The Gun Mechanism Test  
01/13 21.6.1959 A Watch on the Initiative Test  
01/14 28.6.1959 An Exercise in Filming

Issued through BBC Worldwide

## NL Web\_\_Site revamp

Steve Arnold has had a very busy Autumn and has made terrific progress with developing the web sites he puts up. It has been clear in recent months that our current offering needs reviewing: additional information and new graphics are being prepared

and the site will be overhauled and given a face lift. All the 'Larks' will be found there, and as we improve our databases these too will appear on the site. Our Library will be posted once technical problems are sorted. Hopefully the make-over will not

only make the site more informative but also encourage more people to join us and share their recordings and cuttings with us.

The address is:  
<http://www.navylark.org.uk>

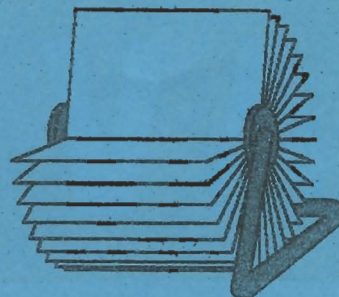
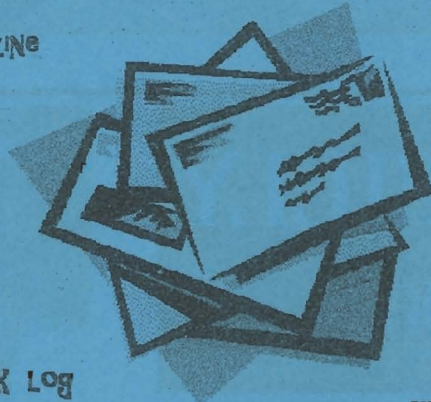


# Contacts

## NAVY LARK ADDRESSES

### Membership & Magazine

Fred Vintner  
The Lodge  
Warrenfield  
Bengeo Herts  
**SG14 3ES**



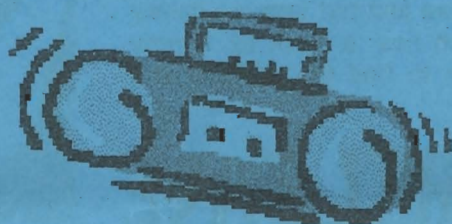
### Library and Audio Archive

Douglas Johnstone  
Lower Garths  
Gulberwick  
Shetland  
**ZE2 9JX**

Navy Lark Log  
Tony Reynolds  
19 Somerset Drive  
Birmingham  
**B31 4RA**

### Web-Site and tape Preservation

Steve Arnold  
100 Stanford House  
Princess Margaret Road  
East Tilbury  
Essex  
**RM18 8YR**



### ORCA

GRAEME STEVENSON  
11 BRUCE AVENUE  
DUNBLANE  
PERTHSHIRE  
SCOTLAND

### BRITISH COMEDY

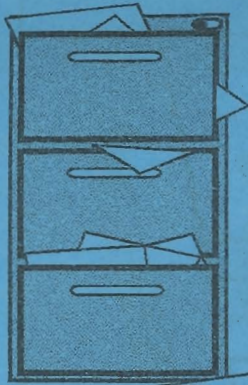
APPRECIATION SOCIETY  
1A WOODBURY  
CASTLE ROAD  
WOKING,  
SURREY  
**TA6 4HU**

## Larking About . . . . .

|                       |                  |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| THE Navy Lark         | 180/243 episodes |
| THE TV Lark           | 9/10 episodes    |
| THE Embassy Lark      | 13/42 episodes   |
| THE Motorway Lark     |                  |
| THE Big BUSINESS Lark | 1/13 episodes    |

At the time of writing, this appears to be our range of programmes. Watch out for new additions to the library. Exciting developments are promised next year!





## Navy Lark Plaques

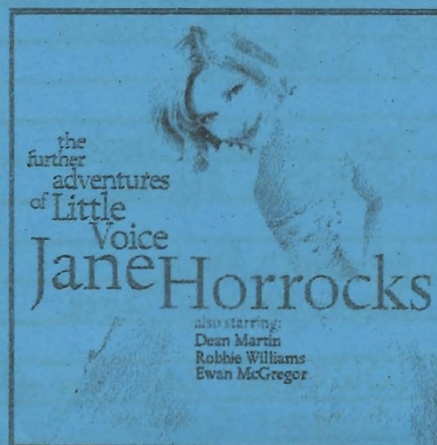
In an earlier edition of Navy Days I advised you that reproduction plaques would be available around Winter time. Unfortunately, due to a prolonged period of poor health no progress has been made in this venture. Apologies to those of you who wrote expressing an interest but I have been unable to undertake the project at this time. I hope to tackle the design and construction work at a later stage. FV

## IN the Media....

A dull Sunday afternoon last Autumn was brightened with Leslie Phillips in *The Fast Lady*; a truly star studded cast and an enjoyable story line. The movie *Saving Grace* with Leslie Phillips was shown on satellite in November; keep a watch for a terrestrial screening. A late night showing of *Doctor in Clover* was put on just before Christmas. R4 repeated *Caligula* in early January. Leslie Phillips plays Incitatus, Caligula's horse!

Tenniel Evans enjoyed a brief appearance recently on satellite G Plus in a re-run of Nicholas Lydhurst's and Janet Dibley's sitcom *The Two of Us*.

Jane Horrocks (Bubbles in *Ab Fab* and Prunella Scales' daughter in the TESCO advert) has just made an album of familiar show and film songs. The disc features a mixture of musical styles which Jane Horrocks delivers in fine form. A number of tracks have accompanying videos. One of the choicest takes the scene from *Some Like it Hot* where Tony Curtis and Jack Lemmon dresses up in female attire and find themselves unexpectedly on stage performing the backing music behind Marilyn Monroe. In the original, film a very wealthy patron takes a shine to Jack Lemmon and sends all the visual messages he can that he is struck by "her beauty"! Lemmon tries to play the situation down to no avail. In the re-make, Martin Clunes is in the orchestra playing the Jack Lemmon character and Leslie Phillips is the lecherous millionaire, and a very enjoyable cameo.



Morse finally finished this Autumn, but Navy Lark fans may just remember that Tenniel Evans appeared in *The Last Enemy* which is currently available on video from a number of sources.

Tenniel Evans spotters may recall a radio appearance in *Yes Minister* as the Foreign Secretary.

Leslie Phillips has featured in 2 TV game shows in recent weeks.

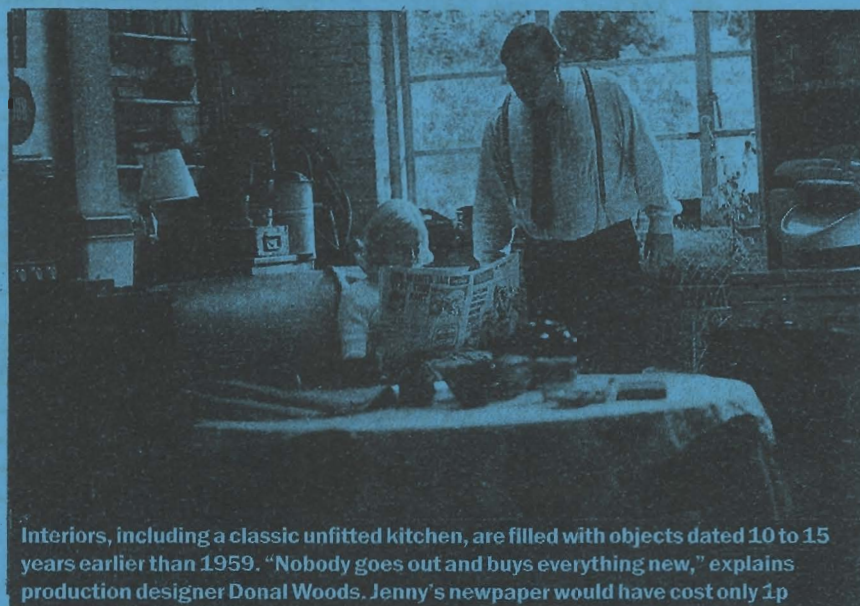
## Take a GIRL Like Her

THREE treats for Navy Lark fans relating to this entertaining series.

In programme 1 a kitchen scene features a Navy Lark broadcast. Careful ears will recognise the show to be "Multiple Mines" first broadcast 24.05.1959. A perfect choice!

Episode 2 witnesses the arrival of Leslie Phillips in a well crafted role. Sheer visual poetry!

Radio Times (2- 8 December 2000) had a fascinating interview with colour photos of Leslie Phillips. The autobiography is on its way, but you will have to wait until the pressure of work eases!



Interiors, including a classic unfitted kitchen, are filled with objects dated 10 to 15 years earlier than 1959. "Nobody goes out and buys everything new," explains production designer Donal Woods. Jenny's newspaper would have cost only 1p

PLEASE Keep an eye on the Media and Send in the details For Future editions



Calais Dock Strike

3/1

Harold Wilson Review the Fleet

19/1

Open Day

24/1

Sir Wiltoughby's Party

25/1

Fleet Initiative Test

1/2

The Anniversary and the working machine

1/3

Cross Country Run

4/3

Mr Murray gets Married

15/3

TV Documentary

20/3

First Day out of Dock.

5/4

Whittlesea Regatta

26/4

Admiral's Party

10/5

Band giving Dace

30/5

Whittlesea Bay Regatta

7/6

Slogan Contest.

20/6

Mr Murray's Anniversary

11/7

Whittlesea Carnival & Fete

24/7

Manzula Revolution

24/7

\* NAVAL REVIEW \*

30/7

THE DOVEY'S MOVE HOUSE

1/8

Steamship Day

2/10

Northampton Ball

6/10

Operation Showcase

7/10

Farewell to HMS Varsity

9/10

TROUTBRIDGE PARTY

13/10

SOUTH KWYN SUMMIT

24/11

Charter Trip to Antartica

1/12

PADRE'S Birthday

22/12

COMFORT FUND DANCE

25/12

JOHNSON'S BIRTHDAY

23/12

Leading Seamen Goldstein's Party

29/12





# Just Kidding....

We have been trying to find someone with a gift of caricature to help us produce images for the association. Simon Blackman has worked for fellow radio enthusiasts but admits to being fully stretched at the present time, and he needs to get to know the show a little better before he can reasonably work on it. So the challenge is on....


Do you know someone who can draw?

Simon has sent us one sketch by way of consolation, for which many thanks!



JON PERTWEE FIGHTING A SHARK

## PertWee's PLUNDER

I was fortunate enough to grow up in Pompey (Portsmouth) and the city delighted in THREE genuine ex MOD stores. In these dark unheated environments it was possible to purchase tropics kits, German air force leather gloves, American parkas and every type of cooking utensil or home furnishing anyone could ever need (we are talking 1950/1960). much of the older stock had W  D

stamped or printed on the surface. A great deal of furniture carried the utility marking to signify that it met with British Government approval. Business in these stores was always brisk. For those of us growing up it was as normal a place to shop as out of town centres are in the year 2001. Part of the magic of buying goods from these outlets was seeing the names of former owners printed indelibly on a surface, and wondering where the person had travelled to with their government issue.

There was always a good supply of gas masks which were regularly handled but

rarely sold. But for most households it was the white enamel steel plates and mugs with dark blue edges that were the essential purchase for camping and picnics. Unbreakable and easy to look after, many a guide and scout would go to camp fitted out with items found from MOD stores. FV

### Top 5 purchases?

- Kitchenware
- Parkas
- Donkey Jackets
- Boots / Boiler suits
- Camping Equipment





## Admiralty Library

Great news for library users. New and superior quality recordings have been found by Gary Schajer in Canada and he is transferring the material from open reel to cassette. The quality is very good indeed and the majority of broadcasts require little or no electronic tweaking to get the material running at the right speed. A full listing of alternative recordings will be published next time but for Jon Pertwee fans we have found enough material to fill TWO 90 minute tapes and they are with Douglas at this very minute!

8/11 PM PaPa  
8/13 Off to Sea at Last  
9/1 Back from the Antarctic  
9/2 Fishing in Troubled Waters  
9/4 Jigsaws and Jemmies  
9/5 The Naval Review

A part copy of 7/5 has arrived and makes a welcome addition to the listing.

Tape X...

Pertwee in Person 1-5 1990  
R2 A Short History of Time

Tape X...

Backstage: BBC LR 1984  
Rare Musical Songs  
Playback: The Navy Lark  
The Conjuror's Game

## Tratvian News.....

Followers of Sub Lieutenant Phillips navigational exploits will be interested to learn that The Embassy Lark 16.04.1968 finds him seeking financial support and hospitality in Tratvia as a result of an Air Hostess. He was due to fly to Spain for a holiday but liked the hostess more and boarded the wrong aircraft. This is the Third mention of Tratvia. We had the Tratvian Emperor in 1964; this was followed by Pertwee imbibing Tratvian Beer in 1966 and finally the 1968 debacle.



When was the last time you REALLY checked those tapes? I bet if you sat down and went through that pile of cassettes whose contents you 'know', you might be surprised. I found gold recently because when material was originally taped off air I did not have a clue how to identify it, so I labelled the box and put it on the shelf. Just as I did, re-visit those tapes and see what you REALLY have! We could all benefit from your efforts.

FV

# RadioTimes



## When Changing Rooms Met the Navy.....

In September last year, the Changing Room team attempted to work their magic on the mess deck of HMS KENT. The results were not quite expected or wanted! Any similarity to one of Pertwee's little scams is purely coincidental.

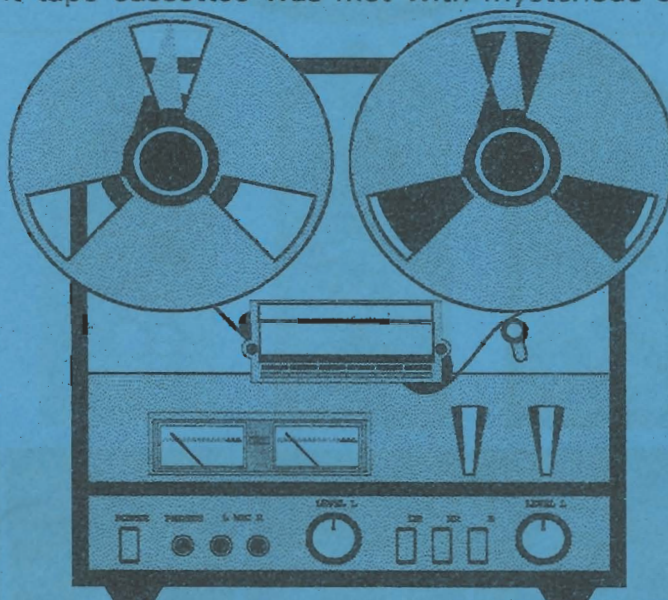
Re-visit "Refitting Pertwee's Tug" 3/2  
09.11.1960



# Audio Restoration

For most of us, the humble cassette tape is the only way we store and listen to favourite broadcast material. Without doubt, we have all made poor quality recordings over the years. Sometimes the reception on the day was bad, sometimes the washing machine or freezer affected the recording and sometimes we just did not set the equipment up correctly. In the days before machines were intelligent, a trip to the shops for replacement tape cassettes was met with mysterious adjectives: 'dynamic', 'super ferrous', 'chrome'. We would tape in and forget "bias" on the inevitably resulted in from a reasonable believe I was the that.....

Well something else The trusty machine a clean up hence the was inferior due to If the recorder was perhaps a motor the correct speed or flat on one side

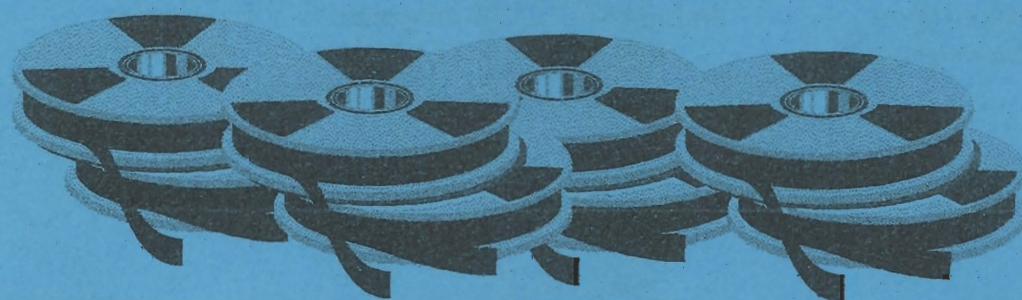


'metal' AND super come home, put the to change the machine. This a 2nd rate recording source. I don't only one to do

could go wrong! might be in need of quality of recording dirt on the heads. showing its age, might not work at a pinch wheel was causing your tape to

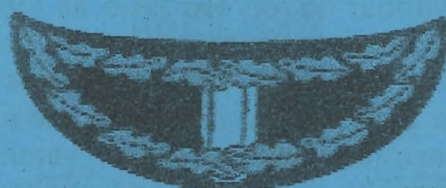
travel at different speeds past the recording head. Often these faults went unnoticed or were accepted by the original owner of a recording. However, as many of us now trade those tapes between ourselves, these aural inconsistencies are very noticeable, even distracting. Years ago the only way to clean up a recording would be to transfer the original recording to 1/2 tape, play it very slowly - mark the passages in pencil, chalk, crayon and tackle the work physically on the tape. However, things have moved on a pace in the last year and two of our number now have access to hardware that fits inside their computers which enables them to tidy up recordings. One or two of you may have been lucky to have a "pitch control" switch on your tape deck. This device allows a little increase or decrease in speed when re-recording material from one machine to another. The new method involves the transfer of sound to the hard drive of a computer where speed, tone, volume can all be modified slightly before returning the material to tape, CD or mini disc. The resultant improvement can make a noticeable difference to some of those rare older recordings and reduce listener fatigue enormously. If you would like to know more, drop a line to Steve Arnold who will recommend a product to you for PERSONAL use! All recordings in the NL library are wherever possible the BEST available recordings. We check them regularly and retire the less listenable recordings. Some shows have had bits tacked on in the past but Douglas has taken great care to listen and ensure that all material loaned by him is THE GENUINE ARTICLE and free from undesirable additions! We hope to run an article on audio restoration using one of the commercial "cards" and software packages, obtainable from computer specialists, in the next issue

FV

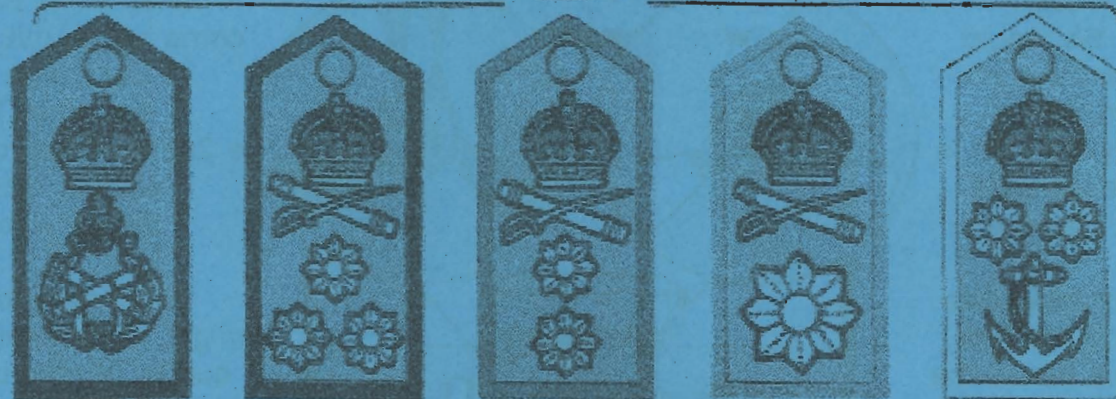




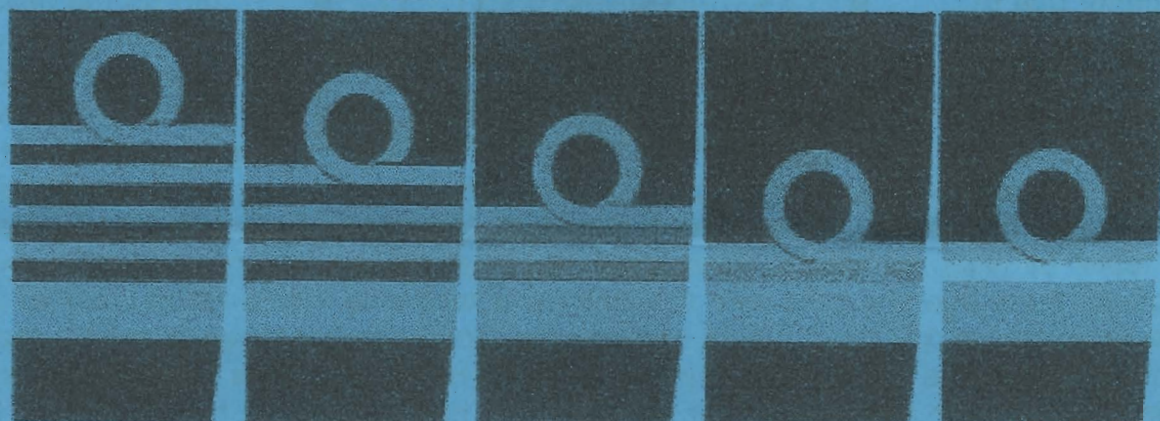
Cap Peaks



Shoulder



Cuff



*Admiral  
of the Fleet*

*Admiral*

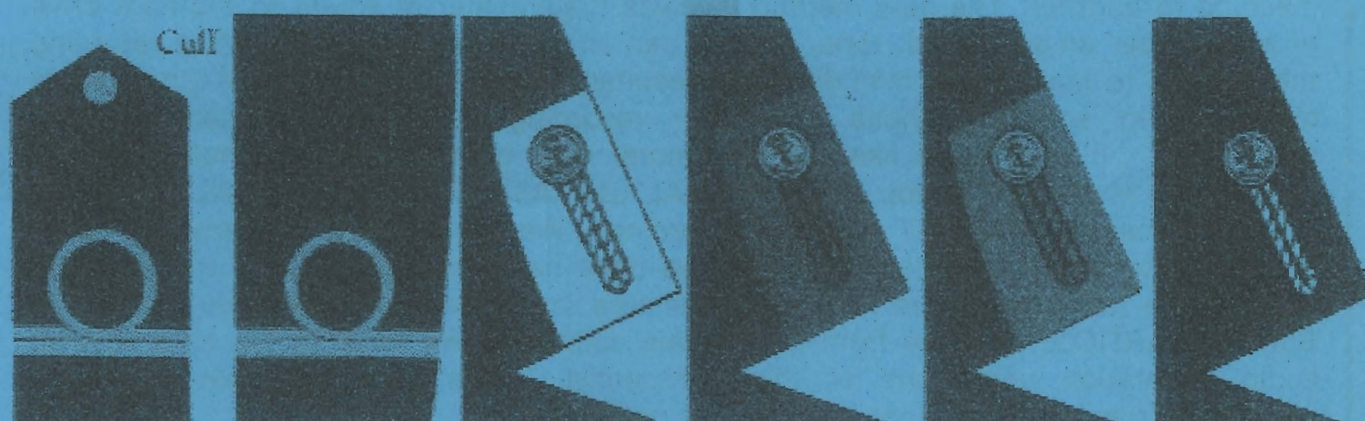
*Vice Admiral  
(Surgeon)*

*Rear Admiral  
(Instructor)*

*Commodore 1st  
Class (Paymaster)*

Cuff

Shoulder



*Warrant Officer  
(Shipwright)*

*Midshipman  
(RN)*

*Midshipman  
(RNR)*

*Midshipman  
(RNVR)*

*Cadet*



# Anglia Community Radio

News has reached us that ACR (Anglia Community Radio) has been re-broadcasting **The Navy Lark**. The information is very sketchy and their website is out of date due to operational problems. They broadcast on satellite Channel 8. The organisation relaunched itself during 2000 with a new name: South East Radio. Anyone who would like to find out a little more could try one of these addresses:

South East Radio  
Harlow College  
Velizy Avenue  
Harlow Essex  
CM20 3LH

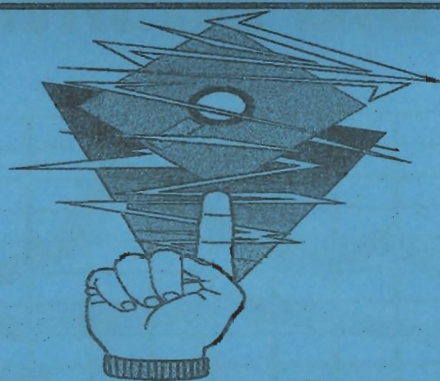
eMail:

acrfm@aic.co.uk OR(?)  
serfm@aic.co.uk

Tel: 01279 868300

If your talent with a computer is better than mine you will be able, on occasions, to download a little information from the site.

## Which Way did it go?



## @NAVYLARK.COM

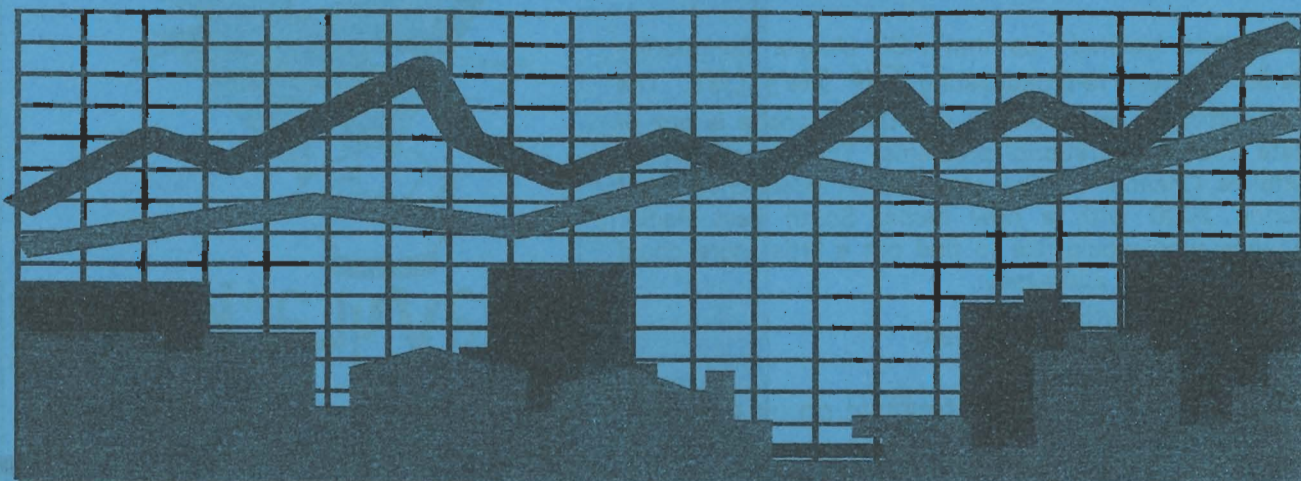
Our colleagues over at Dad's Army have moved forward in the digital world and got themselves eMail addresses which reflect their enthusiasm! We are a much smaller group but if those of you who use eMail would like to see how much this venture will cost, I am sure Steve Arnold will be more than happy to find us a reliable service provider. Mail me your thoughts. FV

As there are so few publicity shots of the crew of Troutbridge the photo on the left is THE ONLY known cast shot! Heather Brookes at the BBC has been looking around the archives for us, but has not found anything new as yet. If you bought the early editions of the Navy Lark the Cassettes came out with cast photo shoots on the card inlays. After NL 7 was published, the BBC had little alternative but to repeat the cover designs or change the format. The Town Group rose to the challenge by the clever use of stylised drawings and situations featuring the crew's antics. The use of limited colour and a strong graphics interpretation allowed the artists to cut and paste cast photographs on different backdrops without fear of repetition and the lack of a large photo library is minimised at a stroke!

The key feature of this photograph is the shield. We know that it was made by ratings on HMS Troutbridge but the location of the emblem is a mystery. Lynne Porter has been investigating and a recent reply from Leslie Phillips suggests that it could be languishing in a props cupboard somewhere at the BBC. She has resolved to continue the search within and outside those walls in the hope that its fate is eventually discovered! People are being drawn in to the investigation at this very minute, can you help?



# THE BIG BUSINESS LARK



Plundering the archives at ORCA will enable keen eyes to spot a couple of tapes entitled *The Big Business Lark*. In fact the library has duplicated an entry, and identical recordings are labelled differently. The joy though is in the recording. The sure footedness of Laurie Wyman's writing is beautifully acted out by

Jimmy Edwards who plays the managing director of a typical(?) British Company of the late 60s / early 70s. Devotees of Whack-of will relish his performances once again. The following log has been prepared for us by Gary Schajer, who has enthusiastically engaged himself with archive radio in recent months.

by **Gary Schajer**

*This parody of British corporate world was set in British United Plastics Ltd., manufacturer of polystymer, an indestructible plastic. The main character was Jimmy Edwards, who played Sir Charles Bonniface, the domineering Chairman and Managing Director. Frank Thornton played his son Frank Bonniface, also a Director of the company. Gwen Cherrell played Sir Charles' long suffering secretary Edith Chalmers.*

*The series was written by Lawrie Wyman and produced by Alistair Scott Johnson.*

*There was just one series of 13 programmes, broadcast on the BBC Light Programme at 2pm on Sundays between 6.7.1969 and 28.9.69. The programmes were: (using unofficial titles based on the ending announcements)*

- |                    |                         |                     |                        |
|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1. <b>06.07.69</b> | Leading You Through     | 8. <b>24.08.69</b>  | Dining Out             |
| 2. <b>13.07.69</b> | Cruising On The River   | 9. <b>31.08.69</b>  | Initiating You Through |
| 3. <b>20.07.69</b> | Taking You Through      | 10. <b>07.09.69</b> | Searching For Liberty  |
| 4. <b>27.07.69</b> | Disposing of A Relative | 11. <b>14.09.69</b> | Contracting Out        |
| 5. <b>03.08.69</b> | Playing Ducks           | 12. <b>21.09.69</b> | Destructing            |
| 6. <b>10.08.69</b> | Taking Orders           | 13. <b>28.09.69</b> | Advertising            |
| 7. <b>17.08.69</b> | Strike Breaking         |                     |                        |

## Supporting cast and characters played

**Elizabeth Morgan**  
 Mavis (1)  
 Stevie (2)  
 Helga (3)  
 Sissy Bonniface (4)  
 Gladys (5)  
 Debbie (6)  
 Welsh Striker (7)  
 Burly (8)  
 Maggie (9)  
 Miss Short (10)  
 Myrtle Burton (11)  
 Miss Short (12)

**Nigel Graham**  
 Benson (1)  
 Potter (2)  
 Mr Benson (3)  
 Hoskins (4)  
 Claude (5)  
 Igor (6)  
 Welsh Striker (7)  
 Mr Earp (8)  
 Ellington King (9)  
 Mr Hinking (10)  
 The Sultan (11)  
 Mr Burke (12)

**Alexander John**  
 Holroyd (1)  
 Stokes (2)  
 German Receptionist (3)  
 Mr Halpacker (4)  
 David Evans (5)  
 Mr Stokes (6) (7)  
 Stanley the Liftman (9) (11)  
 Basher Freemantle (10)  
 Mr Stokes (12)

Spelling of cast names may differ to those recorded here



## For the collection.....

We looked last time at Leslie Phillip's success in the Peter Tinniswood play which was presented in Edinburgh and Hampstead. **Hodder Headline Books** have now issued an audio tape of one of the shows staged in Hampstead.

Without doubt, the monologue is engaging, very funny and perceptive. Leslie Phillips' ability to be not only a sardonic wit but also immensely sensitive within a single sentence demonstrates the highest level of stagecraft. We are taken on a journey through success, reminiscences, despair and resignation with consummate adroitness.

Listeners will find themselves chuckling at one moment and then compassionate the next as the story unfolds. The role is believable, humane and effortless to listen to. The presentation lasts for just one hour and you are left with a desire to meet the character again in order to learn more as well as enjoy his company. This one tape you will definitely wish to play frequently.

ON THE WHOLE  
IT'S BEEN JOLLY GOOD

LESLIE PHILLIPS



HH  
4007

## LESLIE PHILLIPS IN ON THE WHOLE IT'S BEEN JOLLY GOOD

BY PETER TINNISWOOD

'Engrossing'  
Sunday Telegraph

'Perfect'  
The Sunday Times



A copy of Maurice Denham's interpretation has been in the audio archive for some time now, but this interpretation takes the listener on a very different journey which is hugely more enjoyable and thoroughly entertaining. A definite must for your shopping list!

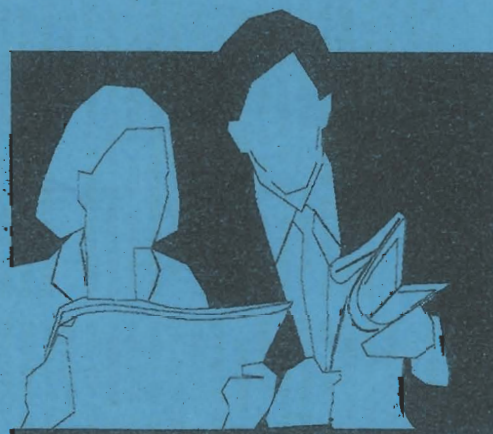
ISBN 1-840-32400-7

## At the PARIS Theatre Studio

Navy Lark devotees will be aware that the actors from the show sat in rows on the stage at the Paris Theatre. Do we have sufficient information to be able to map out a seating plan?

A start can be made using the Jon Pertwee 'Backtrack' programme. Can we have further contributions to construct an accurate plan?

|    |    |   |   |
|----|----|---|---|
| *  | HC | * | * |
| *  | *  | * | * |
| MB | RB | * | * |
| RC | JP | * | * |



## Competition Winners



With the last edition of Navy Days we had NL 12 Cassettes to give away. All you needed to do was to identify the actor who played the **Prime Minister of Forbodial**! Well despite the small list of actors to choose from it appeared to be surprisingly difficult for some of you to get right! I suggest you get Tony Reynolds' excellent log! The answer supplied by Andy Whittle was **Leslie Phillips** and a tape was awarded for the correct response! Congratulations.

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## Obituaries

## Tommy Reilly

Harmonica player who perfected his style in a German prison camp and made classical composers take the instrument seriously



Reilly (1970): his technique was admired by Stravinsky

TOMMY REILLY, who has died aged 81, was the world's leading classical harmonica player: he did much to persuade composers and audiences alike that the mouth-organ could hold its own on the concert platform.

Many had considered that the instrument was fit only for buskers and signature tunes, and certainly Reilly played his share of those, among them the themes to *The Navy Lark* and *Drison of Dock Green*, but he also had some 30 concert works written for him.

These included Michael Spivakovsky's *Harmonica Concerto*, composed for the Festival of Britain in 1951 (the year before Vaughan Williams' *Romance for Harmonica*), as well as works by Gordon Jacob, Robert Farnon and Vilem Tansky.

Reilly believed that the harmonica had been neglected as a serious instrument, especially since it had such a wide range of tones. He himself was as adept on it as Mendelssohn and Walton as he was playing cowboy blues (often with heavy vibrato). He was also a peerless teacher, as well as an accomplished composer for the instrument, although it was as a performer that he was best known to the public.

He recorded several albums with the Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields, conducted by Sir Neville Martin, who said of Reilly's musicianship that "the achieves remarkable virtuosity with a minimum of

faux. Musically he exploits his instrument with refinement and bravura, and ultimately it does not seem to matter what he plays, but how he plays it."

Reilly received even greater compliments from Igor Stravinsky. "After hearing your interpretation of my *Chanson Russe*," said the Russian composer, "I would be happy to let you play anything of mine."

Away from the stage, Reilly was much in demand to play on the soundtracks to films and television series. These included the themes to *Midnight Cowboy* (1969), *Last of the Summer Wine*, *The Singing Detective* and *Those Magnificent Men in their Flying Machines* (1965). Among the film composers he worked with were John Barry, Maurice Jarre, Bernard Herrmann, Elmer Bernstein and Jerry Goldsmith.

Reilly maintained a good relationship with his fellow harmonica player Larry Adler, and also performed with other musicians such as Bing Crosby and Marlene Dietrich.

In 1955, he was called in at short notice to accompany the Italian tenor Beniamino Gigli. When Reilly walked on stage in front of a full house, Gigli looked at him askance. "Where's the harmonica?" he asked—he had been expecting to see an accordion. But having heard Reilly play a few bars, he was more than happy to sing with him.

Thomas Rundle Reilly was born at Guelph, Ontario, on August 21 1919.

His father was a bandmaster and conductor. He was also the founder of one of Canada's earliest jazz bands, as well as of The Elmdale Harmonica Band, with whom Tommy first learned to play the instrument, although he was then sacked for refusing to practise.

Primarily, however, he was a violin player, and although after the family moved to England in 1935 he made his professional debut on the harmonica, it was as a violinist that he was accepted by the Jepping Conservatoire. At night he played in cabaret clubs, where he learned to become a skilled juggler and tight-rope walker.

In September 1939, he was arrested by the Gestapo and interned, the first Canadian to be so; he was assigned Number One on the Red Cross's list of Canadian prisoners. He spent the war in camps in Germany, Poland and France, and it was here that he perfected his technique on the harmonica, modelling his playing on the smooth style of violinists he admired, especially Jascha Heifetz.

He had been friends with Ernst Hohner, whose family firm made harmonicas, and Hohner continued to supply him with these throughout the war. Reilly had to bribe the guards with his Red Cross food parcels in return for letting him receive Hohner's packages.

He finished the war at a camp on Luneburg Heath, being shelled by

both the Germans and the advancing Scots Guards. He had managed to keep his violin with him all through his imprisonment, but then had it stolen on the flight back to Britain.

In the late 1940s, Reilly's appearances on radio and at concerts made him well known, and in 1951 he began his recording career with Parlophone, where his producer was George Martin. He later enjoyed long careers with the Decca and Chandos labels, recording definitive versions of works by Hector Villa-Lobos, Malcolm Arnold and Ralph Vaughan Williams.

The standard reference work on the harmonica, *Harmonicas, Harps and Heavy Breathers*, rates him as the instrument's greatest classical exponent. From 1967, he played on a custom-made silver harmonica.

Tommy Reilly was a straightforward, amiable man who retained a youthful playfulness and a mischievous sense of humour into old age. He had the most professional standards, and knew his own mind.

Once a recalcitrant first violinist appeared incapable of playing as Reilly had repeatedly requested, and had the temerity to tell the maestro that, as a harmonica player, he did not know what he was asking, Reilly seized the violin and played it for him. "That," he said, "is what I meant."

He was appointed MBE in 1992. He married, in 1945, Pina Nabb. They had a son.